

Message Text

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12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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TAGS: UN, PFOR, ET

SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN RESPONSE TO UN APPEAL CONCERNING POLITICAL
DETAINEES

REF: USUN 5608 (NOTAL)

UN PRESS OFFICE ISSUED COMMUNIQUE DEC 3 ENCLOSING TEXT OF
CABLE RECEIVED FROM BRIG. GEN. TEFERI BANTE, WHICH REPLIED
TO JOINT APPEAL BY PRES UNGA AND SYG URGING CLEMENCY FOR
ETHIOPIAN POLITICAL DETAINEES. TEXT RELEASE IS AS FOLLOWS:

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A CABLE DATED 2 DECEMBER FROM BRIG.-
GEN. TEFERI BANTE, CHAIRMAN OF THE PROVISIONAL MILITARY
COUNCIL OF ETHIOPIA, IN REPLY TO THE APPEAL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENT JOINTLY ON 27 NOVEMBER BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE TWENTY-
NINTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ABDELAZIZ BOUTEFLIKA,
AND SECRETARY-GENERAL KURT WALDHEIM URGING CLEMENCY FOR
POLITICAL DETAINEES:

THE PROVISIONAL MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL (PMAC)
ACKNOWLEDGES RECEIPT OF YOUR EXCELLENCY'S TELEGRAM OF 27
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NOVEMBER 1974 CONVEYING AN APPEAL OF THE GENERAL

ASSEMBLY.

THE PMAC AT THE OUTSET WOULD LIKE TO ASSURE YOUR EXCELLENCY AND THE CURRENT PRESIDENT OF THE GA H.E. MR. ABDELAZIZ BOUTEFLIKA, AND THROUGH BOTH OF YOU THE ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP OF THE U.N. THAT WITH THE RECENT CHANGES WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN ETHIOPIA THROUGH THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE, ETHIOPIA IS TODAY IN A BETTER POSITION TO PLAY A MORE MEANINGFUL ROLE IN THE U.N. IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE U.N. CHARTER.

THE PMAC HAS REPEATEDLY DECLARED ITS DEDICATION TO AND ABIDING FAITH IN THE NOBLE PRINCIPLES ENSHRINED IN THE U.N. CHARTER. THE PMAC IS FULLY DETERMINED TO FULFILL ALL ITS COMMITMENTS TO THE U.N., IN PARTICULAR IN THE FIELD OF DECOLONISATION AND THE MAINTENCE OF WORLD PEACE.

THE PMAC'S FUNDAMENTAL PHILOSOPHY OF ETHIOPIA TIKDEM IS PRIMARILY GEARED TO ENSURE THE RESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS NOT ONLY IN ETHIOPIA BUT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE PMAC IS TO ERADICATE PAST SOCIO-ECONOMIC INJUSTICES AND TO BUILD A NEW ETHIOPIA WHERE THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF ALL CITIZENS WILL BE FULLY GUARANTEED, EQUAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE ASSURED AND JUSTICE BASED ON THE RULE OF LAW WILL PREVAIL.

JUDGING FROM WHAT THE PMAC HAS INHERITED, THE PAST HAD BEEN AN ERA OF OPPRESSION WHERE MASSES OF THE PEOPLE WERE CONDEMNED TO LIVE AS "SLAVES" WITHOUT ANY FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS WHATSOEVER. THE VOICES OF THE PEOPLE WERE SYSTEMATICALLY STIFLED, FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, EXPRESSION AND ASSEMBLY WAS DENIED, AND JUSTICE WAS DISPENSED WITH BY THE REGIME TO SUITE ITS OWN WHIMS AND FANCIES.

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE DIED OF HUNGER, MALNUTRITION AND DISEASE BECAUSE OF THE CALLOUS AND MORE OFTEN WANTON POLICIES OF THE PREVIOUS REGIME WHICH WAS PREOCCUPIED WITH EFFORTS TO BUILD AN INTERNATIONAL IMAGE THRIVING AT HOME ON THE IGNORANCE OF THE MASSES OF THE PEOPLE. THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL FIGURES ELIMINATED WITHOUT FAIR TRIAL BY THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAST REGIME IS YET TO BE MADE KNOWN. EXPERIENCES OF MEN OF CONSCIENCE WHO HAD BEEN CONDEMNED TO LANGUISH IN DARK CELLS FOR DECADES HAVE ALREADY BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE MASS MEDIA.

THE PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA HAVE RIGHTLY ACCUSED THE PREVIOUS REGIME OF PRACTISING A POLICY OF GENOCIDE. THE HORRO-STRICKEN STORIES OF SEVERAL THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES DYING OF FAMINE WERE HIDDEN

BY THE PAST CORRUPT REGIME BUT THE INTERNATIONAL CUMMINITY
REVEALED THESE PATHETIC STORIES AND CAME TO THE AID OF A
GRATEFUL ETHIOPIAN NATION.

SINCE ALL THESE FACTS ARE KNOWN TO YOUR EXCELLENCY AND THE ENTIRE
MEMBERSHIP OF THE U.N. IN DETAIL THE PMAC WISHES TO CONFINE
ITSELF TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY APPEAL AS
CONVEYED BY YOU.

THE PMAC WISHES TO REITERATE THAT THE EVENTS TAKING PLACE IN
ETHIOPIA PURELY FALL WITHIN CHAPTER I, ARTICLE II OF THE
U.N. CHARTER. HOWEVER WITH DUE RESPECT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
THE PMAC WOULD LIKE TO STATE THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S
APPEAL HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT SPECULATIVE AS FAR AS FUTURE
ACTIONS OF THE PMAC ARE CONCERNED BASED AS THE APPEAL IS
ON ERRONEOUS ASSEMPTIONS AND FALSE AND MALICIOUS NEWSPAPER
REPORTS. THE PMAC HAS ALREADY MADE IT KNOWN THAT THERE
WOULD BE FAIR TRIAL OF THE PRISONERS IN CUSTODY UNDER THE
LAWS EXISTING IN THE COUNTRY.

IN VIEW OF THIS THE PMAC WISHES TO ASSURE THE U.N. GENERAL
ASSEMBLY THAT THERE IS NO REASON WHATSOEVER FOR THE ASSEMBLY TO
BE CONCERNED OVER THE FATE OF THE PRISONERS WHO ARE REGULARLY
FED AND CLOTHED BY THEIR FAMILIES WITH WHOM THEY MAINTAIN
DAILY CONTACT. THIS IN ITSELF IS A PRIVILEGE WHICH PRISONERS
IN OTHER COUNTRIES RARELY ENJOY. THE PRISONERS ARE THUS
RECEIVING MOST HUMAN TREATMENT.

HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

#FOR TEXT OF APPEAL, SEE PRESS RELEASE SG/SM/2114 - GA/5161.

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